

FS1-Y6: Guidelines for WhatsApp Useage

The sole purpose of our class WhatsApp groups is to further enhance the communication between home and school. In order for these to work successfully, we need to ensure that we have clear guidelines. Please read the guidelines below.

This group is purely for sharing information and matters related to the class and school events.

Please be practical and concise: only give relevant information and avoid anything which is not relevant. It prevents the dissemination of jokes, videos or images that have no relationship with the group. Similarly, do not give out information that does not have to do with the group. eg “I have a friend who makes cakes and is very reasonable” or similar.

Do not answer if you are not going to bring anything to the conversation: often someone asks about a lost item and/or if a child in the class has accidentally packed an item which does not belong to them. If you have not seen this item, it is better not to answer at all than to answer ‘no or I don’t know’ etc. This will prevent important information that has been posted being missed from a parent that has not seen their messages for a while.

Avoid negativity: Any defamatory comments or remarks aimed at another parent/child/member of staff on the group will be brought to the attention of the Leadership team and dealt with accordingly. It is disrespectful and unproductive.

Avoid using the group for your individual child: at any given time you can ask about a task, similar subject or home learning. All the children forget something, or have not fully grasped a concept. If you feel your child is struggling with this, then please email their class teacher directly rather than posting on the group, who will be more than happy to assist.

Respect people’s time and data: The class WhatsApp groups are not for uploading videos that might be acceptable on purely social groups e.g the latest funny cat video etc.

Do not have private chats with one person in the group: if you have something you wish to say to one person in the group and it is of no relevance to everyone else, please message the individual directly.

Substituting it for presence at school: A WhatsApp group for parents should not be a substitute for being present at school. It is a great source of information but it does not replace personal attendance. Meeting and being in direct contact (email/Zoom/Seesaw) with teachers is something this app does not do.

Replacing meetings: On occasions, parents take what is said on the WhatsApp group as a general informed opinion but it does not take into account what other parents that are not on the group chat have to say. Again, it is Important that any decisions related to school or your personal opinions are discussed directly with a member of staff.

COVID19 and Medical Information: COVID19 should not be spoken about on the school WhatsApp groups. If you or a family member has been impacted by COVID19, then you should speak directly with the school. Parents should not be posting information about their own or another child's medical information, they should also be respectful of privacy and confidentiality. We currently live in a global pandemic where every day someone within the community will unfortunately be impacted by this virus. Parents who use the class WhatsApp Groups to cause fear amongst the community will be removed from the group.

Consulting tool: Since communication on WhatsApp is immediate, this app is ideal to stay informed on certain things.

Collaboration: Aside from being a place of dialogue, WhatsApp also allows parents to support each other with their child's education. It can be a way to exchange suggestions, ideas or plans of things to do for the children.

Tolerance: When it comes to speaking with other parents in group chats, keep in mind that not everyone thinks the same way and be careful with what you write! We should be moderate when expressing opinions and always remember why the chat exists in the first place: **to exchange information about our children and school.**

As a reminder - please see attached the social media laws here in Dubai.

Let's be role models to our students about the way we behave on social media. These community WhatsApp groups are here to support one another through a global pandemic.